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DE RUEHKI #0432 1220844
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R 020844Z MAY 09ZDF
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9552
INFO RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 0100
RUEHGI/AMEMBASSY BANGUI 0023
RUEHBZ/AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE 0130
RUEHSB/AMEMBASSY HARARE 1388
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 0255
RUCNSAD/SADC COLLECTIVE
RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK
RHMFSS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE

UNCLAS KINSHASA 000432

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE PASS DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION
USAID FOR OFDA: MSHIRLEY and AFR/EA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAIR](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: DRC AIRPLANE CRASH

¶1. A Boeing 737 aircraft crashed 135 miles southwest of Kinshasa, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo the morning of April 29. Seven persons on the flight were killed; there were no American fatalities. The plane left Brazzaville at 9:42 a.m. local time and crashed while attempting to land in Kikwit, Bandundu province. There are no other reports of deaths.

¶2. The plane is registered under the company name "Air Bako" and was the only plane in the fleet. A Nigerian businessman, El Hadj Baba Baklo, owns the company. The aircraft arrived in Brazzaville April 25 from Bangui for repairs, reportedly involving pressurization of the cabin and replacement of a window. The flight was en route to Zimbabwe for additional maintenance.

¶3. U.S. Embassy Brazzaville has confirmed that there were seven persons onboard. Press reports say two crew members were from Cameroun, two from Congo-Brazzaville, one from the Central African Republic, one from Zimbabwe, and one from Algeria. There are no reports of Americans on the flight.

¶4. Embassy Brazzaville has notified the National Travel Safety Board investigator in Nigeria. The DRC has not made a request for assistance in investigating the cause of the crash.

¶5. Embassy Kinshasa spoke with the office of the governor of Bandundu province. Local villagers reported a column of smoke between the villages of Kenge and Nzazi, in an isolated area of the province, on April 29. Flames from the crash prevented villagers from reaching the crash site until the morning of April 30. No survivors have been found.

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